

DUAL METAL SCHOTTKY DIODE

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BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates to the structure and method of making a dual metal Schottky diode.

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BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIGS. 1A-1B are cross-section views of a partial integrated circuit in accordance with a first embodiment of the present invention.

FIGS. 2-5 are cross-sectional diagrams of a process for forming the dual metal Schottky diode shown in FIG. 1B.

FIGS. 6-7 are cross-sectional diagrams of a process for forming a dual metal Schottky diode in accordance with a second embodiment of the present invention.

FIGS. 8-10 are cross-sectional diagrams of a process for forming a dual metal Schottky diode in accordance with a third embodiment of the present invention.

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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is described with reference to the attached figures, wherein like reference numerals are used throughout the figures to designate similar or equivalent elements. The figures are not drawn to scale and they are provided merely to illustrate the instant invention. Several aspects of the invention are described below with reference to example applications for illustration. It should be understood that

numerous specific details, relationships, and methods are set forth to provide a full understanding of the invention. One skilled in the relevant art, however, will readily recognize that the invention can be practiced without one or more of the specific details or with other methods. In other instances, well-known structures or operations are not shown in detail to avoid obscuring the invention. The present invention is not limited by the illustrated ordering of acts or events, as some acts may occur in different orders and/or concurrently with other acts or events. Furthermore, not all illustrated acts or events are required to implement a methodology in accordance with the present invention.

Referring to the drawings, FIG. 1A is a cross-section view of a partial integrated circuit 2 in accordance with a first embodiment of the present invention. The integrated circuit is divided into two parts based on the fabrication or process flow: the Front-End-Of -Line (FEOL) section 4 and the Back-End-Of -Line (BEOL) section 5. The section that includes the silicon substrate 3 is called the FEOL of the integrated circuit 2. In general, the FEOL section 4 is the transistor layer formed on (and within) the semiconductor substrate 3. The partial FEOL 4 shown in FIGS. 1A and 1B includes a dual metal Schottky diode 22 of the present invention plus a transistor having a gate oxide 6, a gate electrode 7, and source/drain 8, 9; however, it is within the scope of the invention to have any form of logic within the FEOL section 4.

Immediately above the Schottky diode 22 and the transistor is a layer of dielectric insulation 10 containing metal contacts 11 that electrically tie the Schottky diode 22 and the transistor to the other logic elements (not shown) of the FEOL section 4. Preferably, the dielectric insulation 10 is comprised of SiO_2 and the contacts 11 are comprised of

W. However, the dielectric insulation 10 may be comprised of any suitable material such as SiN, SiC, SiON, or a low-k dielectric. In addition, the contacts may be comprised of any suitable material such as Al, Ti, or Cu.

5 The BEOL section 5 contains a single damascene metal layer 12 and at least one dual damascene metal layer 13. However, it is within the scope of the invention to have an integrated circuit 2 with only one (single or dual damascene) metal layer. Layers 12 and 13 contain metal lines 14, 15 that properly route electrical signals and power properly throughout the electronic device. Layer 13 also contains vias 16 that
10 properly connect the metal lines of one metal layer (e.g. 14) to the metal lines of another metal layer (e.g. 15). The metal lines 14, 15 may be comprised of any suitable material such as Al. Furthermore, metal lines 14, 15 may be formed by any suitable process such as deposition, plating, or growth. The single damascene metal layer 12 has dielectric material 17 and possibly a dielectric barrier layer 18 that electrically
15 insulates the metal lines 14. Similarly, the dual damascene layer 13 contains dielectric material 19 and possibly a dielectric barrier layer 20 that electrically insulates metal lines 15 and vias 16.

 In accordance with the best mode of the present invention, the integrated circuit
20 2 has a dual metal Schottky diode 22, shown in FIG. 1B. The Schottky diode 22 consists of a lightly doped semiconductor substrate 3, a metal area (or metal islands) 24, a barrier layer 26, a metal area (or metal layer) 28, and a metal area (or metal layer) 30. The semiconductor substrate 3 may be comprised of any suitable material such as Si, GaAs, or InP (or a composite or layers of those elements). In addition, the barrier
25 layer 26 may be a SiO₂ or SiN dielectric film. However, other materials such as a

deposited SiC or a spin-on-glass ("SOG") could be used for the barrier layer 26. Furthermore, the barrier layer 26 may be removed at during the process of fabricating the Schottky diode 22.

5 Preferably, the metal islands 24 are comprised of PtSi, the metal layer 28 is comprised of TiSi₂ and the metal layer 30 is comprised of Ti. However, it is within the scope of the invention to have metal layers 24 and 28 comprised of any suitable materials such as CoSi₂, VSi₂, NiSi, NiSi₂, ZrSi₂, WSi₂, TaSi₂, MoSi₂, or NbSi. Moreover, it is within the scope of the invention to omit barrier layer 26 and/or metal
10 layer 30.

Referring again to the drawings, FIGS. 2-5 show the process for manufacturing the dual metal Schottky diode 22 shown in FIG. 1B. Before the dual metal Schottky diode is fabricated, a layer of photoresist (not shown) is applied and patterned using a
15 lithography process. The openings in this photoresist layer define the locations and size of the dual metal Schottky diodes. In the best mode application, a barrier layer 26 is now formed over the entire substrate. The barrier layer may be formed using any manufacturing process such as Chemical Vapor Deposition ("CVD") or Plasma-Enhanced Chemical Vapor Deposition ("PECVD"). Any standard manufacturing tool,
20 such as the Centura (from AMAT) or Concept (from Novellus), may be used to create the barrier layer 26. In addition, the barrier layer 26 may be formed chemically by reacting the silicon surface with an oxidizer (such as hydrogen peroxide or nitric acid).

In this example application, the barrier layer 26 is comprised of SiO₂ and is 20Å
25 (20 nm) thick. However, it is within the scope of the invention to have any suitable

barrier layer thickness appropriate for the composition of the dual metal layers 24, 28, the barrier composition, and the desired voltage drop V_f of the final dual metal Schottky diode.

5 Also as shown in FIG. 2, a first metal layer 23 is formed over the barrier layer 26. In the best mode application, the first metal layer 23 contains Pt and is approximately 300Å thick. However, the thickness of the Pt layer 23 may be anything above 150Å. In addition, the thickness of the first metal layer 23 may vary depending on the metal composition used. In the example application, the first metal layer is deposited by any
10 well-known manufacturing tool, such as an Endura (from AMAT), a MRC/TEL (from Eclipse), or a Perkin Elmer 4400 series machine.

The semiconductor wafer is now annealed. In the example application, a rapid thermal process ("RTP") is used to heat the wafer to approximately 575° C for 30-60
15 seconds in an O₂ and a N₂ ambient. A Centura RTP by AMAT may be used for this anneal; however other standard process tools and process parameters may be used. For example, a horizontal or vertical furnace may be used to heat the wafer to 500° C for 20 minutes in an O₂ or a N₂ ambient. During the anneal process the barrier layer 26 will limit the diffusion of Pt from the first layer metal 23 into the Si substrate 3.

20 After annealing, islands of PtSi 24 are formed within the semiconductor substrate 3, as shown in FIG. 3. It is to be noted that the temperature for the anneal process is selected so that the first metal layer 23 reacts with the semiconductor substrate 3 but not other materials such as the field oxides or gate oxides.

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In the best mode application, the unreacted Pt layer 23 is now removed with an isotropic chemical etch process. More specifically, a standard chemical bench tool is used to etch Pt layer 23 (e.g. in a chemistry of $\text{H}_2\text{O}:\text{HCl}:\text{HNO}_3$ for 10 minutes at 75°C). However, it is within the scope of the invention to use any method to remove the unreacted portions of the unreacted first metal layer 23. In addition, it is within the scope of the invention to perform an additional anneal after the removal of the unreacted Pt layer 23.

As shown in FIG. 4, a second metal layer 30 is formed over the semiconductor wafer (i.e. over the barrier layer 26 if the barrier layer is not removed, or over the silicon and first metal islands if the barrier layer is removed). In the best mode application, the second metal layer 30 contains Ti and is approximately 400\AA thick. However, the thickness of the Ti layer 30 may range from $300\text{-}800\text{\AA}$. In addition, the thickness of the second metal layer 30 may vary depending on the type of metal used. In the example application, the second metal layer is deposited by any well-known manufacturing tool, such as an Endura (from AMAT), a MRC/TEL (from Eclipse), or a Perkin Elmer 4400 series machine.

The semiconductor wafer is now annealed. In the example application, a rapid thermal process ("RTP") is used to heat the wafer to approximately $625\text{-}750^\circ\text{C}$ for 20-40 seconds in a N_2 ambient. A Centura RTP by AMAT may be used for this anneal; however other standard process and tools may be used. For example, a horizontal or vertical furnace may be used to heat the wafer to $600\text{-}675^\circ\text{C}$ for 30-60 minutes in a N_2 ambient.

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After annealing, the Si from the semiconductor substrate 3 diffuses into the second metal layer 30 and forms a layer 28 of TiSi_2 24, as shown in FIG. 5. It is to be noted that the temperature for the anneal process is selected so that the second metal layer 30 reacts with the semiconductor substrate 3 but not other materials such as the field oxides or gate oxides.

In the example application, a step of etching the unreacted second metal layer 30 (or selected portions of that layer) is optional. If the second metal layer 30 is not removed than it may be used as an electrical contact for the dual metal Schottky diode 22. If the second metal layer 30 is removed, any well-known etch process may be used. For example, sulfuric based (piranha) chemistry or a chemistry of $\text{H}_2\text{O}/\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$ (5:1 ratio) at 40-60° C for 30-60 minutes may be used to strip the unreacted Ti (or the selected portions of Ti). In the example application, a second anneal is now performed; however, this additional anneal is optional. Any standard process may be used for the second anneal. For example, a Centura RTP could be used at 820-910° C for 10-30 seconds in a N_2 ambient, or a furnace could be used to heat the wafer to 750-850° C in a N_2 ambient for 30-60 minutes.

At this point, the fabrication of the semiconductor wafer continues until the integrated circuit is complete. That fabrication process would include the formation of contacts 11 shown in FIGS. 1A and 1B that electrically connect the dual metal Schottky diode 22 to the proper components of the integrated circuit 2.

It is within the scope of the invention to use any suitable metal for the first metal area 24 and the second metal area 28 of the dual metal Schottky diode 22. As stated

above, the metal components 24, 28 of the dual metal Schottky diode may be any suitable metal composition such as PtSi, TiSi₂, CoSi₂, VSi₂, NiSi, ZrSi₂, WSi₂, TaSi₂, MoSi₂, or NbSi.

5 It is also within the scope of the invention to use one or more masks to create a dual metal Schottky diode 22 in any one of many configurations. An example variation of the dual metal Schottky diode 22 is shown in FIGS. 6-7. A first mask is used to form the areas (i.e. a first amount) of a Pt first metal 32 and a second mask is used to form the areas (i.e. a first amount) of a Ti second metal 34 shown in FIG. 6. After the
10 anneal and subsequent etch of the unreacted metal 32 and 34, the final dual metal Schottky diode structure 22 would contain areas of PtSi 36 and areas of TiSi₂ 38, as shown in FIG. 7.

 Alternatively, a lithography process could be used to create a patterned
15 photoresist mask layer 40 that is then used to create sections of a Pt first metal 42, as shown in FIG. 8. After removing the exposed metal and ashing the semiconductor wafer to remove the photoresist layer 40, the semiconductor wafer is annealed to form areas of reacted PtSi 44, as shown in FIG. 9. In this alternative embodiment, a Ti second metal layer 46 is deposited and the wafer is then annealed to form a layer of
20 reacted TiSi₂ 48, as shown in FIG. 10.

 When one or more masks are used to fabricate the Schottky diode in accordance with this invention, it is within the scope of the invention to use a dual metal Schottky diode with the barrier layer 26 removed. If such a diode is desired then the dual metal
25 Schottky diode is fabricated without a barrier layer 26, or the barrier layer 26 is

eliminated with the removal of the first unreacted metal or after the removal of the first unreacted metal.

Moreover, it is within the scope of the invention to use photoresist masks to
5 create different dual metal Schottky diodes 22 throughout the integrated circuit 2. For example, patterned photoresist layers could be used throughout the fabrication process to form the dual metal Schottky diode 22 of FIG. 5 and the dual metal Schottky diode 22 of FIG. 10 at different locations within the same integrated circuit 2.

10 It is to be noted that a variety of structures and metals can be used to create a dual metal Schottky diode having a V_f that is anywhere between the V_f of a Schottky diode containing the first metal and the V_f of a Schottky diode containing the second metal. Specifically, by using a barrier layer to limit the interaction of the first metal with the substrate, or by using a mask to apportion the area of the diode between the first
15 and second metals, a Schottky diode can be fabricated to have any desired V_f between the V_f levels obtained with Schottky diodes comprised of single metals. The use of one or more photoresist masks during wafer fabrication also facilitates the incorporation of dual metal Schottky diodes having different voltage drops at different locations throughout the integrated circuit 2.

20 Various modifications to the invention as described above are within the scope of the claimed invention. As an example, instead of placing the dual metal Schottky diode 22 immediately above the semiconductor substrate 3 as described above, the dual metal Schottky diode 22 may be placed in any location (or various locations
25 simultaneously) within the front end section 4 or back end section 5 of the integrated

circuit. Also, the present invention may be used in any integrated circuit configuration, including integrated circuits having different semiconductor substrates, metal layers, barrier layers, dielectric layers, device structures, active elements, passive elements, etc. In addition, barrier layer 26 may be a metal barrier film (TiSiN, TiN, TaN) instead of
5 a dielectric barrier film. Furthermore, the invention can be used on a non-semiconductor substrate by using a deposited silicide formed by Chemical Vapor Deposition (using WSi), Physical Vapor Deposition (using a composite target), or by reactive sputtering. Moreover, the invention is applicable to other semiconductor technologies such as BiCMOS, bipolar, SOI, strained silicon, pyroelectric sensors, opto-
10 electronic devices, microelectrical mechanical system ("MEMS"), or SiGe.

While various embodiments of the present invention have been described above, it should be understood that they have been presented by way of example only, and not limitation. Numerous changes to the disclosed embodiments can be made in
15 accordance with the disclosure herein without departing from the spirit or scope of the invention. Thus, the breadth and scope of the present invention should not be limited by any of the above described embodiments. Rather, the scope of the invention should be defined in accordance with the following claims and their equivalents.